

service of thanksgiving. Many community leaders and congregational members celebrated the event with prayer and a march from the Central Park Plaza to the new edifice. Moving forward to 2008, the Consecration and Ordination Service for leader Bishop T. Anthony Bronner occurred with the Fellowship members as witnesses. Everyone was extremely excited and joyful over Pastor Bronner's initiation into the Bishopric.

Undoubtedly, ELIM faced an unprecedented amount of hardship, but years of struggle were made worthwhile when ELIM Christian Fellowship just recently made its final payment on its multimillion-dollar mortgage. Now the ministry can move forward and serve the community without hesitation. They have a permanent home.

Our community is grateful for the leadership of the ELIM Christian Fellowship and for their dedication to guiding countless Buffalonians in faith and service.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF HAL DONALDSON AND CONVOY OF HOPE

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 1, 2022

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the founder of Convoy of Hope, Hal Donaldson.

In 1994, Hal took a trip to India and was inspired to start serving his local community. He bought \$600 worth of groceries and distributed them to families in need. In 1996, Convoy of Hope opened its headquarters in Springfield, MO, and in 1997 a friend donated a tractor trailer to assist in transporting goods. It was the first of many tractor trailers which are now iconic. Since 1994, Convoy of Hope has expanded into a global charity, serving more than 100 countries. They have served more than 200 million people and given out nearly \$2 billion in resources and essential supplies. They have responded to more than 600 disasters worldwide, including the 9/11 terror attacks, Hurricane Katrina in 2005 where they sent nearly 1,000 tractor trailer loads of food and supplies as well as Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria in 2017. They also provided more than 200 million meals during the COVID pandemic and are currently helping to provide meals for Ukrainians impacted by the war. These are but a few examples of the incredible work done by Convoy of Hope.

Convoy of Hope continues to expand their efforts, and in 2021, they completed construction on their new World Distribution Center in Springfield and are currently working to build a new headquarters next door, which is expected to be completed in 2023.

Madam Speaker, since their humble beginnings in 1994, Hal Donaldson and Convoy of Hope have become a global leader in responding to disasters and providing food for the hungry. They continue to grow through the help of volunteers and generous donations. I am proud to honor them today, and thank them for all of their efforts to date and going forward.

HONORING LIBERTY BANK AND TRUST ON CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF QUALITY BANKING IN AMERICA AS THE FIRST BLACK RUN BANK IN LOUISIANA

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 1, 2022

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Liberty Bank and Trust, a financial institution celebrating 50 years of quality banking in America as the first Black-run bank in Louisiana.

In November 1972, New Orleans was a city with a majority African American population. However, there were very few African Americans in elective office and limited resources for the development of African American businesses and personal wealth building. Following decades of segregation and limited voting rights, New Orleans was a city awakening to increased opportunities for its African American citizens.

Dr. Norman C. Francis conceived the idea of starting an African American owned bank in New Orleans following the failure of at least two other efforts to start such an institution. In late 1971, he approached a bi-racial group of businesspeople and elected officials with the idea and was able to secure the resources to open Liberty Bank on November 16, 1972, in a bank trailer on the site of its first Headquarters Building on Tulane Avenue in New Orleans. During its first week of operations, Liberty opened over 2,000 accounts, clearly demonstrating the need for an African American owned financial institution in New Orleans.

With \$2 million dollars in assets, Liberty reported a substantial profit for its first year of operations and has reported profitable years 46 of its 50 years in existence. The Liberty Bank Building on Tulane Avenue opened 2 years later. That same year, Liberty opened its first branch office on Gentilly Blvd.

Liberty's mission is to provide cost-effective delivery of high quality, innovative, customer driven financial products and services to diverse markets with a focus on disadvantaged minority communities who have traditionally been underserved. Concurrent with the bank's mission, Liberty strives to maintain the company's status as a catalyst for economic and community development while generating fair returns to shareholders and being an excellent corporate citizen.

Some of the members of the bi-racial group that worked with Dr. Francis in the early years to get the bank started included:

C.C. Dejoie—Publisher, Louisiana Weekly
Judge Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial, Then State Senator

Mike O'Keefe
Judge Israel Augustine
Owen Brennan, Jr., Prominent Restaurant owner

William J. Connick
Benjamin J. Johnson, Esq.
Ambrose J. Pratt, Jr., MD
Dr. Langston F. Reed, Local Dentist and Activist

Norman P. Zucker
Joseph O. Misshore
Ms. Jesse W. Cook
Joseph E. Berrigan, Jr.

Ben D. Bridgeman
Joseph G. Landrieu, Jr.
Jennings Courville
Tricon (Clem) Sehr

A key development in the early years was the financing of Doley Securities', the first Black seat on the New York Stock Exchange owned by Harold Doley, Jr., becoming the only African American in its history to do so. The bank's additional key notes include asset growth over first 20 years, mortgages processed, work with National Bankers Association and community outreach efforts.

Once committed to opening an African American owned bank, Dr. Francis secured the only African American working above the level of teller in any bank in the New Orleans community to run the bank. That was Alden McDonald, joining the bank at the ripe age of 29 years old. Effective May 2, 2022, the board of directors of Liberty Bank and Trust Company announced that Todd O. McDonald was named the bank's president. Liberty's former President and CEO Alden J. McDonald Jr., Todd's father, continues to lead the Liberty Financial Holding Company. Dr. Francis is still chair of the Liberty Bank Board 50 years later, and Alden McDonald was one of the longest serving African American Bank Presidents in America.

Liberty Bank established its Baton Rouge presence in 1994 and opened a third branch in 2004. Liberty then moved into Mississippi in 2003, acquiring First American Bank in Jackson. This was followed by expansion into the Greater Kansas City market with the acquisition of Douglass bank in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, in 2008.

Liberty Bank and Trust Company expanded across Greater New Orleans with the 2009 acquisition of United Bank and Trust Company, securing four additional locations to serve that market. That was followed by the acquisition of Home Federal Savings in Detroit, Michigan, which increased the bank's reach to six states. In 2013, Liberty Bank entered the Chicago market with the acquisition of Covenant Bank of Illinois, and in 2015, the bank expanded to Montgomery and Tuskegee, Alabama through the purchase of First Tuskegee Bank.

Liberty Bank's growth has been the result of acquisitions, fruitful partnerships, aggressive marketing, strong management, staff productivity and the trust it enjoys in the community. It all adds up to an efficient, well-capitalized institution that is perfectly positioned to continue fast-paced growths in both profits and assets. Liberty Bank is passionate about helping more people achieve more economic freedom.

Today Liberty Bank is the largest financial institution in the United States owned by African Americans. It has assets of more than \$1 billion dollars, a customer base of over 40,000 accounts with 175 employees, and still growing, while recognized as one of the fastest growing financial institutions in the country.

Todd McDonald said in a press release, "I've been singularly driven to build solid stakeholder partnerships and evolve financial products which meet the financial needs of an ever-changing world. This next 50 years will be extraordinary as we reshape our culture, talent and organizational capabilities which will make us more agile, more competitive, and more effective in our efforts to close the wealth gap in underserved communities across the country."